

14 February 1983

His Excellency Mr Habib Chatti  
Secretary General  
Organisation of the Islamic Conference  
PO Box 178  
Jeddah

Your Excellency,

Assalaam Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuhu.

I write to draw your attention to the very grave problem of the Biharis in Bangladesh.

In 1971 many thousands of Biharis, non-Bengali, Urdu-speaking Pakistanis, were stranded in the new country of Bangladesh. Since then a number have been allowed to migrate to Pakistan. There are, however, still over 300,000 left in Bangladesh, who are living in the most appalling conditions, most of them on the mercy of international relief organisations.

The Presidents of both Pakistan and Bangladesh have shown understanding of the problem, and for a long time Mr David Ennals, a Member of Parliament at Westminster and a former Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as well as a former Minister of Health, has taken a keen and compassionate interest.

David Ennals is going to write to you also, and we would both like to meet you, perhaps during the course of one of your visits to Paris, to discuss more fully this humanitarian problem. I hope that you will be able to arrange this.

I hope that this letter finds you in the best of health. May God bless you.

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam  
Secretary General

cc Mr David Ennals